MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS

NOAA
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
NORTHEAST REGION
HABITAT CONSERVATION DIVISION

October 2004

GLOUCESTER, MA OFFICE, ONE BLACKBURN DRIVE, GLOUCESTER, MA 01930

PENOBSCOT RIVER SCIENCE FORUM, ORONO, MAINE

The Penobscot Partners, a nonprofit organization established under the Lower Penobscot River Basin Settlement Accord, held a two-day forum to discuss past, current, and future research on the Penobscot River related to ongoing restoration efforts. Local and regional resource specialists attended, as well as national experts, to share dam removal and river restoration experiences. Local issues with dam removal and opportunities associated with the larger restoration efforts were brought to the forefront.

The Penobscot River is the largest watershed system in the state of Maine, covering a third of the state. Because it is so large, it crosses diverse habitats and is subject to many local and regional issues that will require outreach, education, and scientific research. Another issue of great importance is the ecological implications between alewife and bass as dam removals occur. Research on the interaction between various life stages of alewife and bass will be an important step in addressing this important resource management concern.

Presentations included an historical overview of the use of the Penobscot River dating back to pre-colonial time. An overview of the ecological implications of dams on wildlife and the loss of pool-riffle complexes was given, as well as a review of opportunities which may be afforded to locals by the restoration effort. A panel discussion, the strongest part of the forum, was led by presentations from six nationally recognized experts. The talks provided insight into the dam removal process from local, regional, and national dam removal experiences. Many supported full dam removal where the goal is to restore fish passage. Where full dam removal is not an option, determining data needs for fish passage should be primary, followed by building facilities in such a manner as to address the data needs. In either case, communication is a critical component of the process based so that requirements and expectations are known. The panel provided additional comments regarding the importance of nutrient transport by anadromous species, geomorphic effects of dam removal, and tracking basic hydrographic data and changes in sentinel species such as shrimp, mussels, and salmon.

A great deal of meaningful information was presented. The true value of the forum will be realized in the end product produced by the Penobscot Partners and follow-up to begin focusing data gathering and research efforts. The Penobscot Partners is a coalition of American Rivers, Atlantic Salmon Federation, Maine Audubon Society, Natural Resources Council of Maine, Penobscot Indian Nation, and Trout Unlimited. **(sean.mcdermott@noaa.gov, 978/ 281-9113)**

CONCEPTUAL HOWLAND BYPASS DESIGN PRESENTED

On October 1, the Penobscot Partners and fishery resource agencies had a first glance at conceptual design for a nature-like fishway at the Howland dam on the Piscataquis River. As part of the Lower Penobscot River Basin Settlement Accord, the Howland dam may be purchased by the Penobscot Partners, decommissioned, and a fishway bypass constructed. Several factors drove the initial conceptual design, including spring high water flow, the elevation change, and construction and maintenance access. The design of this bypass would improve fish attraction flow and diversion of extreme high flows over the dam's spillway. The Town of Howland is very interested in the project because many citizens want to maintain the impoundment, and the Town would like to incorporate plans for the bypass with the anticipated revitalization of the adjacent area. Funding for the conceptual design was provided by Trout Unlimited through their Partnership with NOAA's Restoration Center.
(sean.mcdermott@noaa.gov, 978/ 281-9113)

JAMES J. HOWARD MARINE SCIENCES LABORATORY, HIGHLANDS, NJ 07732

NEW YORK HARBOR RESTORATION

Bayshore Recycling, Inc. applied for a Department of the Army permit to moor a barge for approximately two years in a shallow water area near the Raritan River. HCD staff recommended that the applicant provide some compensatory habitat for approximately 0.5 acres of shallow water habitat that would be lost with the barge placement. To assist the applicant, HCD staff worked with the ACOE to determine compensation that would fit in with the ACOE's Harbor Restoration Project, and still meet NOAA's recommendations. A shallow water restoration project near the mouth of the Raritan River was suggested and could be additionally enhanced with a cooperative effort from a private company. **(Stanley.W.Gorski@noaa.gov, 732/ 872-3037 or Karen.Greene@noaa.gov, 732/ 872-3023)**

SOMERS POINT LONGPORT BLVD. DREDGE DISPOSAL SITE

Habitat staff met with the applicant, Randall Scarborough, and state and federal agencies to discuss a proposal to use a 30-acre site, including 8.68 acres of previously filled upland for a dredge material disposal site. The parcel is located on Somers Point - Longport Boulevard in the Bar Harbor area of Egg Harbor Township, Atlantic County, NJ and is currently owned by Atlantic County and is designated as open space. The county has expressed a willingness and desire to use this site for dredge spoil deposition in exchange for a comparable open space land exchange. Other known dredge disposal sites are either filled or approaching capacity. The site is centrally located and could be utilized by area marinas, including Harbour Cove (owned by applicant) as well as municipal and county entities requiring maintenance dredging. Access to

the upland areas of the site would require crossing of coastal wetlands within this previously disturbed area. A formal needs study and alternatives analysis would be performed prior to specific application being made to the regulatory agencies. The applicant would need to demonstrate that efforts have been made to avoid and minimize impacts to coastal wetlands, and that compensatory mitigation for any loss would be made a condition of the permit. **(anita.riportella@noaa.gov, 732/ 872-3116)**

HANCEY'S POND, LACEY TOWNSHIP, NJ

Habitat staff met with Lacey Township officials and state and federal agencies to discuss a proposal to dredge and provide shoreline stabilization for Hancy's Pond which is located at the end of Laurel Boulevard in Lacey Township, Ocean County, NJ. Hancy's Pond includes a maintained navigation channel which leads to manmade lagoons with some residential development and adjacent, undeveloped properties. The entrance channel was originally cut in at right angles, and this, as well as long term vegetative growth on an adjacent island, has created an obstructive line-of-site safety problem for vessels entering and exiting the lagoon. There is also shoaling at the entrance to Hancy Pond. The proposal discussed was: 1) the removal of 3,000 - 5,000 cubic yards of material by a hydraulic pipeline dredge from the navigation channel in Hancy's Pond, which would be pumped for temporary storage on township owned property near the terminus of Laurel Boulevard and then stored at township property to be used as needed by the township; 2) the removal of the tip of the small island across from Laurel Boulevard to improve line-of-site; and 3) placement of rip-rap as shoreline stabilization. The waters outside the lagoon area contain submerged aquatic vegetation and shellfish beds. Issues that need further investigation include: demonstration of capacity and facility to hold dredged material at the disposal area, possible impact from contaminated effluent from disposal area to shellfish area, demonstration of need and avoidance and minimization of impacts on the shoreline by bank stabilization, and alternatives to the removal of the tip of the island, such as lower profile vegetative replacement. **(anita.riportella@noaa.gov, 732/ 872-3116)**

MACCHIA'S ISLAND DREDGE DISPOSAL SITE

Habitat staff met with representatives from Middle Township and state and federal agencies to discuss a proposal to expand an existing dredged material disposal site called Macchia's Island in the Borough of Avalon, Cape May County, NJ. Two concepts were explored: reconstruction and raising of the existing exterior berms and the creation of an interior separation berm to provide two storage cells and utilize existing dredge materials on site to create an access road to the island from Avalon Boulevard in order to provide a renewable source of dredge material; or expand the existing upland footprint of the dredge spoil site (increase volume by 70%) and construct exterior and interior berms for cell division, and the creation of new wetlands contiguous to the Back Bay area to mitigate for wetlands lost. Both options include a cell dewatering drainage system consisting of perforated pipes, sluice gate chambers, cleanout chambers, and light duty flap gate check valves on the outfall pipes to accelerate the dewatering process. With the potential for impacts on wetlands, an alternatives analysis would need to demonstrate that avoidance and minimization of impacts have been addressed for this non-water dependent use. Some considerations include the high cost of mitigation for as much as 9 acres of wetland impacts with an expansion of the facility and the ability of the wetland substrate to withstand additional expansion. The discharge of potentially contaminated effluent to the

adjacent waterway which contains shellfish beds also needs further investigation. In addition to the boroughs' need to dispose of material dredged from the back bays, the ACOE and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection expressed the need for regional disposal sites in the area for the disposal of material removed from the routine maintenance dredging of the Intracoastal Waterway. **(anita.riportella@noaa.gov, 732/ 872-3116)**

MILFORD, CT OFFICE, 212 ROGERS AVENUE, MILFORD, CT 06460

OFFSHORE LNG PORT PROPOSED FOR LONG ISLAND SOUND

Preliminary contact was made by representatives of Broadwater Energy to construct a liquid natural gas (LNG) terminal about nine miles off the coast of Riverhead, NY and about 11 miles south of the Connecticut shoreline. The project sponsors are TransCanada and Shell. As proposed, the terminal would consist of a floating storage regasification unit (approximately the same size as a luxury cruise ship) that would receive LNG shipments from ocean-going carriers and subsequently regasify the LNG. It would connect to the existing Iroquois pipeline system through its own subaqueous pipeline, approximately 25 miles long. The proposed structure is intended to store up to eight billion cubic feet of natural gas, of which approximately one billion cubic feet could be transmitted through the pipeline daily. If constructed, a safety zone would be established around the proposed facilities. Additional information will be forthcoming when the project is formally announced in early November. Public hearings will be held in New York and Connecticut. In the interim, interested parties may visit Broadwater's corporate website at: http://www.broadwaterenergy.com. **(**Diane.Rusanowsky@noaa.gov**, 203/ 882-6504)**

UPCOMING HUDSON RIVER NATIONAL HERITAGE RIVER CONFERENCE:

The Hudson River National Heritage River Initiative will hold a conference focused on the needs of modest-sized boat clubs and marinas in early November. HCD staff has been participating in interagency, state-federal coordination on some of the materials that will be made available to participants. HCD staff will also participate on a panel discussion regarding the various permitting issues surrounding applications by boat clubs and commercial marinas located between Westchester and Rensselear Counties. It is possible that certain facilities may be able to link their future projects, potentially saving multiple mobilization and demobilization costs and similar efficiencies. (**Diane.Rusanowsky@noaa.gov, 203/ 882-6504)**

OXFORD, MD OFFICE, 904 SOUTH MORRIS STREET, OXFORD, MD 21654

GLENVILLE RESTORATION

Glenville is a residential area in northern Delaware that has historically experienced local flooding. Following severe flood damage resulting from Hurricane Henri, the county and state developed a plan to purchase 160 selected properties (approx. 40 acres) to be converted into nontidal wetlands for flood water storage, nutrient assimilation, and habitat. Approximately one million cubic yards of material needs to be removed to implement the project, some of which will be used for the proposed improvements to I-95. **(Tim.Goodger@noaa.gov, 410/ 226-5606)**

WEIDMAN FARM RESTORATION

The Weidman Farm, an 800-acre parcel of land, 260 acres of which are tidal wetlands, is located in Worcester County, MD adjacent to the Maryland Coastal Bays. The property owner has approached the Natural Resources Conservation Service, who, in cooperation with other federal and state resource agencies, is developing a plan to restore the tidal marshes that have been degraded by decades of anthropogenic activities, particularly channelization. The restoration plan will include upland buffers and other elements to enhance local estuarine water quality, as well as restoration of the integrity of the marsh. **(Tim.Goodger@noaa.gov, 410/ 226-5606)**

PIKE PROPERTY RESTORATION

The Pike property is a large tract of tidal freshwater marsh adjacent to the Mispillion River near Milford, DE, which also has been degraded by anthropogenic activities, particularly channelization of the river in 1938 by the ACOE to create a federal navigation channel. Preliminary field investigation indicates that the site has solid potential for restoration, which if implemented, would be included as part of the settlement for the DuPont Superfund site. **(Tim.Goodger@noaa.gov, 410/ 226-5606)**